United Nations A/60/118

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 July 2005
English
Original: English/French

Sixtieth session
Item 103 of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region

Report of the Secretary-General

Contents

		Page
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Replies received from Governments	2
	Albania	2
	Burkina Faso	4
	Turkey	4

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.

05-42023 (E) 200705 080805

I. Introduction

1. On 3 December 2004, the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/108, entitled "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region", by which, inter alia, it called upon all States of the Mediterranean region that have not yet done so to adhere to all the multilaterally negotiated legal instruments related to the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, thus creating the necessary conditions for strengthening peace and cooperation in the region, and encouraged all States of the region to favour the necessary conditions for strengthening the confidence-building measures among them by promoting genuine openness and transparency on all military matters, by participating, inter alia, in the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures and by providing accurate data and information to the United Nations Register on Conventional Arms. The Assembly also encouraged the Mediterranean countries to strengthen further their cooperation in combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, and in combating international crime and illicit arms transfers and illicit drug production, consumption and trafficking, which pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region and therefore to the improvement of the current political, economic and social situation and which jeopardize friendly relations among States, hinder the development of international cooperation and result in the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and the democratic basis of pluralistic society. Furthermore, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request and on the basis of information received from Member States.

2. In this connection, a note verbale dated 25 February 2005 was sent to all Member States requesting their views. To date, the Governments of Albania, Burkina Faso and Turkey have replied and their responses are contained in section II below. Any replies received subsequently will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Albania

[Original: English]
[29 April 2005]

Albania aspires to ensure its basic security interests through active preventive diplomacy and enhanced cooperation with neighbouring and regional countries. Albania actively participates in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, the Partnership for Peace and, particularly, in its Planning and Review Process, the Membership Action Plan and the Adriatic Charter, and aspires to become a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union. Albania is also active in the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe and participates in other regional initiatives, such as the South-East European Cooperation Process and the South-East Defence Ministers process.

In 2003, Albania signed the Adriatic Charter with the United States of America, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia and considers it to be a contribution to security in the region and at large.

In accordance with the Vienna Document 1999 article II, Albania has provided to the members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe periodically and annually information concerning its defence planning, global exchange of military information and information exchange on the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

The prime objective of Albania is integration in NATO collective security structures. Reductions in its armed forces are based on the concept of national security in the framework of NATO collective security, with due regard also to the lack of a major conventional threat in the Balkan region, the potential for regional crises and the attempt to create a European security and defence identity.

Our goal is to make contributions to peaceful cooperation and security with regional neighbours and NATO partner countries, through such actions as multinational training activities and operations to support peace. This is a contribution to regional confidence-building and transparency, through its openness regarding the missions and structure of Albania's military, and thus advances the goals of arms control agreements.

Albania is aware of terrorism as a global threat to peace and security. This phenomenon has been reviewed through the key State documents dealing with security and defence issues. The defence policy of Albania considers terrorism to be one of the main challenges and risks to general security in the forthcoming period. It is trying to keep pace with the modern world in the prevention of and fight against terrorism.

Albania is a State party to all 12 United Nations anti-terrorism conventions, fully ratified by the Albanian Parliament.

- The Albanian armed forces continue to participate in the Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are participating in Afghanistan with a platoon in the framework of the International Security Assistance Force mission. Also, efforts are being made to deploy a medical unit there with specialized personnel from the countries of the Adriatic Charter.

- The Albanian armed forces are also participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom, with a commando company of 120 troops.

- Albania participates in the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia and is present on the staff of the South-Eastern Europe Brigade as a regional initiative in support of peace and stability.

- Albania and Greece have established an agreement that facilitates cooperation focused on the trafficking of human beings, drugs, illegal migration and border management.

- The cooperation with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia consists of signing legal instruments to discuss the transborder issues and on preventing illegal activities.

- The cooperation with Montenegro has been effective for fighting against human trafficking and the smuggling of goods over the borders.

- Albania and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) have established cooperation during the last two years. It has been focused on the exchange of information.

- Close cooperation with Interpol and the police forces of other countries has been established to fight against terrorism.

- Albania has taken appropriate measures in fulfilling the requirements of the international agreements to prosecute or extradite terrorists, as well as to prevent and combat terrorism, such as:

  • The establishment of a regional centre for fighting against illicit trafficking, drugs, smuggling and illegal emigration

  • Increasing border control, in order to prevent any international terrorist elements from entering the country

  • The agreement in 2002 between the General Staff of the Albanian armed forces and UNMIK and the Kosovo Force for increasing border security and control, exchanging information and patrolling the borders

  • The establishment of anti-terrorist and drug units within the Ministry of the Interior

Albania, as a factor of peace and stability in the region, does not support terrorist acts in any form and will continue to devote its efforts to strengthening regional and European security. Albania is aligned with the coalition forces and is already committed to the anti-terrorist campaign with all of its assets and capabilities.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]
[14 June 2005]

The Government of Burkina Faso is concerned about issues of international peace and security. It is therefore constantly working for the establishment of a climate of stability in all regions of the world.

Although it is not part of the Mediterranean region, Burkina Faso, in the spirit of resolution 59/108, has already adhered to several legal instruments whose implementation will contribute to the strengthening of security and cooperation in this region.

Turkey

[Original: English]
[12 May 2005]

Turkey believes that cooperation among Mediterranean countries to counter existing risks and threats to security and stability in the region should be strengthened and intensified by identifying areas of common interests and concerns and possibilities for further coordinated action.

Mediterranean countries have a common stake in the security and stability of this region. Every effort should be exerted to prevent crises from happening and to reduce the risk of aggravating existing crises and disputes.

A shared commitment to embrace cooperative security is a key for stability and progress. No State should strengthen its security at the expense of other States. However, cooperative security requires a true partnership based on mutual accountability, transparency and confidence at both the domestic and the foreign policy levels.

Security is indivisible. With this understanding, Turkey strongly supports efforts in various international forums, i.e. the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union, that could produce results in addressing threats, preventing potential conflicts and promoting mutual understanding in the Mediterranean region. We believe that there is an enormous potential to be explored in this regard.

In this context, Turkey encourages all countries to draw on the existing expertise in setting up structures and mechanisms in the Mediterranean for early warning, preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention. Establishment of a conflict prevention centre for the Mediterranean region as a tool for confidence-building should also be considered. Confidence-building is a key factor in resolving disputes.

We should also put more focus on implementing joint projects in concrete areas.